

## The Truth About Declawing

*Why do you want to declaw your cat?*

- I've always done that with my cats.
- My other cats are declawed.
- The vet says I should.
- I'm afraid the cat will scratch up my furniture.

*But do you know the long-term ramifications of declawing a cat?*

Declawing is an incredibly painful procedure for your cat.

It can take months for kitty to recover. We never recommend declawing an adult cat.

- Declawing is like removing your cat's fingers; they have to walk on their knuckles the rest of their lives.
- Declawing can lead to long-term health effects with kitty.
- Declawing can lead to balance issues with kitty.
- Declawing often leads to long-term litterbox issues with kitty.
- Declawing can lead to obesity in cats.

*You do NOT need to declaw your cat! Why?*

Kitties have nails to help them with a number of things. Whether claws are used to play with toys, reach something or to stretch the claws are an essential part of the feline physique. Did you know that cats actually stretch by extending their claws and stretching horizontally or vertically? Once you remove their claws, they are no longer able to stretch, leading cats to be more **overweight**.

Can you imagine **never being able to stretch**? When we stretch we tone our muscles. Declawing eliminates that natural function.

*So, how do you get your cat to use the scratching post?*

All of our cats are exposed to scratching posts and encouraged to scratch on them. An easy and inexpensive scratching pad is a mud rug, the kind that when you walk on it doesn't feel good on your feet. Otherwise, visit Fleet Farm or any pet store to purchase a vertical scratching post. Put your scratching post in an area where you hang out. Your kitty will want to be near you when you're home so encourage use of the scratching post by putting it in your living room or near your kitchen. Another location is to put the scratching post where your kitty sleeps. The first things humans do and kitties when they wake up is stretch! So since they stretch and scratch at the same time, put the scratching post where they usually sleep. You can always add a little catnip to the scratching post or purchase spray catnip and spray it where you'd like kitty to scratch.

There are also [Soft Paws](#) or [Soft Claws](#) nail caps, small little caps you can glue onto your kitties' nails to prevent scratching.

**Are you worried about trimming your cat's nails?**

Trimming nails is very easy. If you sit on the floor with your knees slightly bent, place the kitty gently on top of your knees. Gently extend the fingers apart and the claw will immediately extend. Using a cat nail trimmer (our favorite are the small scissor-type, available at your local pet store), extend each nail one by one, and trim each nail, staying away from the pink area (called "the quick"). If this is your first time trimming, have a friend or family member gently massage the kitties' head and under the jaw. Make nail trimming a fun experience, and stay away from the pink area. Only people in the U.S. declaw their cats. It's not allowed in Western Europe or Australia. In addition, Berkley, California recently banned declawing! Cats are the only species of animal to actually walk on their claws. Once you remove them, **their balance is altered and they forever walk on scar tissue and damaged nerves for life.**

Urination is the leading reason cats are surrendered to shelters across the U.S. 9 times out of 10 the cats are declawed. There is a direct correlation between declawing and sensitivity in the paws, which lead to a decrease in interest in using litter in the litterbox.

What's best for the cat is to keep its natural claws. It's unheard of to declaw a dog, but it's commonplace for cats. In actuality, cats need their claws to function. All of their nerve endings are exposed and damaged after a declaw. Sometimes, the claws can grow back unnaturally and stick through the nerve tissue, causing lifelong pain. Please consider alternatives to declawing, it's best for your family and for kitty!